

what's new **IN CALIFORNIA**



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EDITOR'S NOTE

There is always something new and exciting in California. As your resource for statewide news, the California Travel and Tourism Commission (CTTC) is pleased to present this release describing new developments taking place in the various regions of the Golden State. Consumers can get free California travel planning information by visiting CTTC's Web site at visitcalifornia.com or by writing to the address above.

Residents of the United States and Canada can also receive travel planning information by calling (800) 862-2543. International travelers need to dial (916) 444-4429.



DISNEYLAND PARK CREATES NEW UNDERWATER ADVENTURE ATTRACTION

As part of
the Year of a
Million Dreams
celebration,

the Disneyland Resort announced the next "E-Ticket" attraction to join Tomorrowland in Disneyland park—Finding Nemo Submarine Voyage, scheduled to debut on June 11, 2007. The underwater adventure will feature the eight submarines of Disneyland's original Submarine Voyage attraction. Finding Nemo Submarine Voyage is inspired by the Disney presentation of the Pixar Animation Studios film, "Finding Nemo." As a member of the sub crew, guests will embark on an expedition to observe an active undersea volcano. Soon after departure, they will discover their favorite fish friends getting into the swim of things right alongside their submarine. Nemo and his friends are able to go along for the ride thanks to new projection technology developed by Walt Disney Imagineering that allows them to appear exactly as they do in the film, but now in a three-dimensional underwater setting. There will be several exciting moments when guests aboard their submarine will be able to see Nemo while the other characters won't. After surviving a sub-shaking volcanic eruption, the subs dive alongside a beautiful coral reef where Marlin, Nemo and all their friends gather to celebrate finding Nemo at last. Media contact: Betsy Sanchez, Disneyland Resort, (714) 284-6386, Betsy.e.sanchez@disney.com, www.disneyland.com. Public contact: Disneyland Resort Information, (714) 781-4565, www.disneyland.com.

HOTEL MÉNAGE COMES TO ANAHEIM

Anaheim welcomes the Hotel Ménage onto the scene as the city's newest premier boutique hotel and resort. The hotel, a former Holiday Inn, is scheduled to complete a nearly \$20 million renovation project in May 2007. The renovation includes remodeling public spaces and guestrooms, and the addition of several new elements: the award-winning k'ya restaurant; a hip, candle-lit lobby bar and lounge; the Mist pool bar; the Red Room, a business center with a lush twist; and seven uniquely themed breakout rooms. Hotel Ménage offers 4,700 square feet of flexible indoor conference and special event space, and an outdoor pool deck venue with over an acre of space designed to host a nightclub on Friday and Saturday evenings. Media Contact: Marlena Nelson, (714) 758-0900, x7629, marlena@casaresortsinc.com, www.casaresortsinc.com. Public contact: Hotel Ménage, (714) 758-0900, www.hotelménage.com.

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NEW ATTRACTIONS OPEN AT KNOTT'S BERRY FARM

Knott's Berry Farm will unveil its newest thrill ride, Sierra Sidewinder, at the entrance to Camp Snoopy in June. This coaster puts a new twist on traditional roller coasters with the debut of a coaster that not only offers speed, but spin. Sierra Sidewinder consists of two trains, each with four cars. Each car carries four riders arranged two across in two rows, seated back to back. The cars will take riders through a series of nose-dives, banks, dips and turns at a speed of 37 miles per hour, while continually rotating on its axis. Though this thrilling whirlwind lasts little over a minute, it covers 1,411 feet of track that includes a drop of 39 feet. In addition to Sierra Sidewinder, an all-new ice show debuts June 17. "Snoopy's Big Bow Wow" will entertain guests in the Charles M. Schulz Theatre. This production is filled with special effects, elaborate costumes, and professionally choreographed acts by world-class champion ice skaters. Media contacts: Michele Wischmeyer or Jennifer Blazey, Knott's Berry Farm, (714) 220-5130, pr@knotts.com, www.knotts.com. Public contact: Knott's Berry Farm, (714) 220-5200, info@knotts.com, www.knotts.com.



AUTRY NATIONAL CENTER PRESENTS TWO NEW EXHIBITS

The Autry National Center will present

two new exhibits this summer: "Pistols—Dazzling Firearms" and "Gene Autry and the Twentieth-Century West." Running May 18 through August 12, "Pistols" explores the diversity of American firearm decoration since the mid-19th century represented by a selection of handguns from the Autry National Center's permanent collection. When Samuel Colt received U.S. Patent no. 138 for his "repeating pistols" in 1836, he embarked on not only a remarkable commercial endeavor but he developed the extraordinary artistic field of firearms decoration. In "Gene Autry and the Twentieth-Century West," the Singing Cowboy's influence on myth and history in the American West will be explored. Organized into three galleries, the show begins by examining how motion pictures and radio broadcasting brought about a

convergence of cultures during the 1930s and 1940s. The second gallery features Autry's move from motion pictures to television in 1948. Besides starring in television programs in the 1950s, Autry also produced TV videos and acquired stations to broadcast them. Gallery Three shows another transition in the early 1960s, through which Autry combined baseball with broadcasting after the American League awarded him a franchise for the Los Angeles Angels. This exhibition opens June 22 and will run through January 13, 2008. Media contacts: Jane Stenehjelm or Yadhira De Leon, Autry National Center, (323) 667-2000, x265, jstenehjem@autrynationalcenter.org, ydeleon@autrynationalcenter.org, www.autrynationalcenter.org. Public contact: Autry National Center, (323) 667-2000, www.autrynationalcenter.org.

NEW MODERN SCULPTURE COLLECTION ADORNS GETTY CENTER

Twenty-eight modern and contemporary outdoor sculptures donated to the J. Paul Getty Museum from the collection of the late legendary film producer Ray Stark and his wife, Fran, will be in place for public viewing starting June 4. The gift ensures that the collection will remain in the city where the Starks made their home for more than 60 years. Many of the 20th century's greatest sculptors are represented in the collection: Robert Adams, Saul Baizerman, Alexander Calder, Mark di Suvero, Dame Elisabeth Frink, and Alberto Giacometti, among others. While the sculptures will be dispersed in gardens and public areas throughout the site, they will be most prominently featured in two new named spaces. The Fran and Ray Stark Sculpture Garden, located at the tram departure area where visitors enter the site, features primarily British sculpture. Adjacent to the West Pavilion, outside the entrance to the Getty Museum's new terrace level Center for Photographs, visitors will find another sanctuary in the Fran and Ray Stark Sculpture Terrace, where the sculptures installed describe the broad outlines of figurative sculpture's move from representation to abstraction. The sculptures will also be included in many of the Getty's roster of educational programs. Media contact: Desiree Alcalde-Wayne, The Getty, (310) 440-7304, dalcadewayne@getty.edu, www.getty.edu. Public contact: The Getty, (310) 440-7300, info@getty.edu, www.getty.edu.

LAX BREAKS GROUND AT INTERNATIONAL TERMINAL

The long anticipated renovation of the Tom Bradley International Terminal (TBIT) at Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) broke ground in February 2007. The \$723.5-million project calls for major interior renovations, installation of an in-line checked-baggage security system, and a second boarding gate to accommodate large aircraft such as the Airbus 380 and Boeing 747-800. Considered the largest individual project in Los Angeles' history, the significant changes are expected to help LAX retain its competitiveness as the premier West Coast international gateway, especially to the Asia-Pacific region. The terminal will remain fully operational during construction. The 38-month project is expected to be completed by March 2010. LAX is the fifth busiest airport in the world with 53 percent of LAX passengers being served by TBIT. Media contact: Robin McClain, LA INC. The Los Angeles Convention and Visitors Bureau, (213) 236-2397, rmccclain@lainc.us, www.seemyLA.com. Public contact: Nancy Castles, Los Angeles World Airports, (310) 646.5252, www.lawa.org/lax.

MALIBU BEACH INN TO REOPEN IN JUNE

The Malibu Beach Inn is scheduled to reopen in June 2007 after completing a multi-million dollar remodel that will make the privately-owned property the only luxury hotel destination in Malibu. The renovation, which began in October 2006, includes completely refinished interiors and exteriors, a new dining room, expanded meeting space and a members-only beach club. The improved 47-room Malibu Beach Inn is designed to complement its location on the sands of Malibu's exclusive Carbon Beach by featuring clean-lined architecture and interiors, a beach-inspired color palette and natural materials. Rich woods, elegant stone, sleek glass and polished steel create an organic indoor/outdoor experience that utilizes the setting's marine assets. Media contact: Brian Garrido, Burditch Marketing Communications, (323) 932-6262, briang@burditchmc.com, www.burditchmc.com. Public contact: Alan Goldschneider, Malibu Beach Inn, (800) 562-5428 or (310) 456-6444, www.malibubeachinn.com.

MARK TAPER FORUM TO RENOVATE

The Music Center of Los Angeles County will begin a \$30 million renovation of the Mark Taper Forum in July 2007. Construction will continue through mid-2008 with renovations to the lobby, theatre and backstage. The lobby will be expanded to include a new lobby bar and will feature decorative terrazzo flooring. Inside the theatre, upgrades will include new seating, elegant railings along the aisles and improved acoustics. To increase accessibility for patrons with disabilities, an elevator will be installed and seating will be increased by 37 percent. The backstage will also undergo numerous changes to allow for new technology and more space for cast and crew. The theatre will be closed during renovations, however Taper subscribers will be offered a four-play subscription for the 2007–2008 season that includes two productions in the Ahmanson Theatre followed by two productions in the newly remodeled Mark Taper Forum. Media contact: Catherine Babcock, (213) 972-3335, cbabcock@musiccenter.org or Nancy Hereford (213) 972-7376, www.centertheatregroup.org/theatres/mtf.

NOAH'S ARK OPENS AT THE SKIRBALL CULTURAL CENTER

The Skirball Cultural Center in Los Angeles will unveil its new permanent exhibit, Noah's Ark, on June 26. Five years in the making, this innovative destination for children and adults was inspired by the ancient flood story of Noah's Ark that spans many cultures around the world. In the hands-on gallery, visitors create rain, brave a storm, then climb aboard a gigantic wooden ark to interact with handcrafted animals. From life-sized giraffes and elephants to snow leopards, flamingos and iguanas, the fanciful puppets and figures represent 186 species. The adventure culminates outdoors under a real rainbow. Open Tuesday through Sunday. Admission to the Skirball Cultural Center, including Noah's Ark, is \$10 general; \$7 seniors and full-time students; \$5 children ages 2 to 12. Children under 2 are free. Media contact: Mia Carino, (310) 440-4544, communications@skirball.org, www.skirball.org. Public contact: Skirball Cultural Center, (310) 440-4500, www.skirball.org.

PORTOFINO HOTEL & YACHT CLUB COMPLETES RENOVATION

The Portofino Hotel & Yacht Club in Redondo Beach, opened in 1962 by racecar enthusiast Mary Davis, has completed a major top-to-bottom renovation. Guestrooms, public and meeting spaces, and the restaurant have all been updated to reflect a contemporary yet relaxed atmosphere. The lobby features striking, two-story high windows that look out onto the Pacific Ocean. Five ultra-luxe oceanside suites overlooking the Pacific have been added to the property, each averaging 700 square feet. The suites feature sitting rooms, two 44" plasma screen TVs, a double-sided fireplace opening into the sitting room and bedroom, four-post wrought iron bed, glass desk and claw foot bath tub. Bathrooms in each guestroom feature sleek, modern fixtures including counter-mounted vessel bowl sinks, black granite counter tops and alabaster-colored marble floors. Rooms and common areas are adorned with mirrors reminiscent of portholes, and stunning art depicting nautical scenes. Public spaces including the pool, fitness center and entryway have been revamped, and the freestanding BALEENLosangeles restaurant features new interiors and new concept in cuisine: New American gourmet comfort food with a seafood focus. Media contact: Maris Somerville, Somerville Associates, (310) 207-5663, maris@somervillepr.com, www.somervillepr.com. Public contact: Portofino Hotel & Yacht Club, (310) 379-8481, www.hotelportofino.com.

RENAISSANCE HOLLYWOOD HOTEL EMBARKS ON \$29 MILLION RENOVATION

The Renaissance Hollywood Hotel is scheduled to break ground on a \$29 million renovation project in April 2007. The project will include the new Dark Bar and lounge and Light Spa, and refurbished guest rooms, lobby, and outside pool. Design for Dark Bar and lounge was inspired by chic hotspots in New York and Las Vegas. With the creation of Light Spa, the outdoor pool and the exercise area will be redesigned. Overlooking the famous Hollywood sign, the hotel's pool will become a more intimate affair, with a new bar offering world-famous Wolfgang Puck creations. The hotel's 637 guestrooms and 33 suites will be updated with new furnishings, beds and draperies, flat screen LCD TVs and soft goods including the Marriott Revive Bedding

and plush towels. The lobby will be expanded to include a Marriott Great Room that comprises a welcome zone where guests can check in, access concierge services and purchase retail items; an individual zone for relaxing, reading, catching up on emails or simply enjoying a quiet snack; a social zone where groups can meet informally; and a business zone offering a business center and multi-functional boardroom with a variety of A/V equipment. Media contacts: Susan Hartzler, HR Public Relations, (818) 998-6299, susan@hrpublicrelations.com or Lisa Roughley, HR Public Relations, (702) 228-5169, lisa@hrpublicrelations.com. Public contact: Renaissance Hollywood Hotel, (323) 856-1200, www.renaissancehollywood.com.

QUEEN MARY DEBUTS 40TH ANNIVERSARY EXHIBITS

2007 marks the 40th anniversary of the Queen Mary's 1967 arrival in Long Beach and the debut of new exhibits. The newest exhibit to the Queen Mary is "The Queen Mary Historic Exhibit: Her Story is History." This incredible display takes guests through the chronological history of the legendary ocean liner from her construction and launch, to her important WWII service years as a troopship carrier, all the way to her arrival in Long Beach. Running from April–September 2007 is "The Incredible World of SPY-Fi" exhibit. This amazing display showcases approximately 400 spy gadgets, props, and artifacts from the Danny Biederman SPY-Fi Archives. Spy fans will be exposed to the Hollywood perception of the cloak-and-dagger world of the undercover and mysterious. Opening June 15 and running through early September, the Sun Deck Gallery will present the work of Michael Childers in an exhibit titled "Rockin' Hollywood." Early celebrity-filled photos of the ship will be among the 80 images of Hollywood icons and legends. The Queen Mary is open daily from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Media contact: Lovetta Kramer, RMS Foundation (Queen Mary), (562) 499-1620, lovetta.kramer@queenmary.com, www.queenmary.com. Public contact: Queen Mary, (562) 435-3511, www.queenmary.com.

CRAZY CRUISER MAKES NORTH AMERICAN DEBUT AT SANTA MONICA PIER

Pacific Park®, the two-acre amusement park on the Santa Monica Pier, is rolling out its own red carpet for the premier of Crazy Cruiser as it makes its North American debut this summer. Crazy Cruiser is an adrenaline-pumping game that features a pair of bikes whirling 360 degrees as challengers pedal fast and furious to the finish while competing for prizes. Rising nearly 50 feet above the Pacific Ocean, Crazy Cruiser racers experience accelerations of up to 2g during the one-minute spinning contest on the uniquely designed single or two-person bikes. The custom-built, oversized bikes sport a colorful California appearance with a vibrant yellow background that's accentuated with stripes and strokes of magenta, purple and red with the bikes' tires trimmed in metallic blue. The game's frame is lined with multi-colored chaser lights to heighten the racing effect for riders. The one-of-a-kind Crazy Cruiser anchors Pacific Park's Pier Pressure Zone, which includes 21 midway games. Pacific Park is the West Coast's only amusement park on a seaside pier. Media contact: Cameron Andrews, Pier Communications, (562) 432-5300, cameron@piercomm.com. Public contact: Pacific Park on the Santa Monica Pier, (310) 260-8744, www.pacpark.com.



AIRLINE SERVICE FROM SFO INCREASES TO EAST COAST AND MIDWEST
Beginning May 3, 2007, JetBlue Airways will

offer low-fare service between San Francisco International Airport (SFO) and New York/JFK and Boston. JetBlue will offer four flights daily between SFO and New York/JFK and one flight daily between SFO and Boston. Midwest Airlines is increasing service to San Francisco as part of its strategic growth plan for 2007. Beginning June 1, Midwest will enhance its year-round Kansas City to SFO service from one to two nonstop roundtrip flights daily. The airline will also increase the duration of its nonstop seasonal service between Milwaukee and San Francisco from May 1 through October 31, two months longer than in 2006. Media

contact: Michael McCarron, San Francisco International Airport, (650) 821-4000, michael.mccarron@flysfo.com, www.flysfo.com. Public contacts: JetBlue Airways, (800) 538-2583 or (801) 365-2525, www.jetblue.com; and Midwest Airlines, (800) 452-2022 or (415) 570-4000, www.midwestairlines.com.

FISHERMAN'S WHARF PASS OFFERS SAVINGS ON WHARF ATTRACTIONS

Major attractions at Fisherman's Wharf are included in the new Wharf Pass being offered by TourCorp, Inc. Buyers can select six options from a group of 12 attractions for a savings of 33 percent off admission fees. The pass allows users to visit each of the six attractions once over the course of three consecutive days. Options include a choice of a hop-on, hop-off CitySightseeing tour on a double decker bus or a San Francisco Gray Line Trolley Hop tour; Bay cruise aboard the Blue & Gold Fleet or Red & White Fleet; Ripley's Believe It or Not! or Pier 39's Turbo Ride; Wax Museum at Fisherman's Wharf or the USS Pampanito submarine tour; Aquarium of the Bay or tours of historic ships at Hyde Street Pier; Boudin Sourdough Bakery Museum tour or a ride on the Pier 39 carousel. The Wharf Pass is \$61 for adults and \$38 for children ages 5–11. Media contact: Terry Koenig, (415) 726-3712, koenigandassoc@sbcglobal.net. Public contact: Fisherman's Wharf Pass, (866) 550-4474 or (415) 440-4474, www.wharfpass.com.

FLORA VISTA INN OPENS IN SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

Flora Vista Inn, a new five-room bed and breakfast, celebrated its grand opening this spring. The renovated, two-story historic home is within walking distance to the beach in Santa Cruz County and overlooks rolling hills to the back. Guestrooms offer sweeping vistas of adjacent flower fields and feature antiques, in-room fireplaces and whirlpool tubs. Located in La Selva Beach, the inn was originally built in 1867 by Frederick Thurwachter, a German immigrant farmer. The farmhouse is a replica of Abraham Lincoln's Springfield home, and was the first neo-Georgian-style house built in the Pajaro Valley. In 1997 it was moved six miles to its present two-acre location and renovated into a charming, estate quality home while retaining the warm and cozy feel of the old farmhouse.

Accommodations include a complete gourmet breakfast and afternoon wine and cheese. Media and public contact: Christina Glynn, Santa Cruz County Conference & Visitors Council, (831) 427-4405, x 112, cglynn@santacruz.org, www.santacruzcounty.travel.

GALLERIA PARK HOTEL GETS \$7.1 MILLION MAKEOVER

With its convenient location on the corner of Kearny & Sutter streets in San Francisco's South Financial District, the Galleria Park Hotel represents the best of both worlds for travelers seeking either work or play—or both. The Hotel recently completed a \$7.1 million makeover to its 177 guestrooms and public areas. Previously known as the Sutter Hotel, the property was constructed in 1911 and had not been renovated since the 1980s. Joie de Vivre Hospitality took over management in June 2005 and immediately embarked on the extensive Art Deco renovation project. The result is a stunning showcase of vibrant tones, eclectic furnishings and a host of clever business traveler amenities such as ergonomic desk chairs, a tech tool box and business “honor bar” stocked with office materials, including everything from paperclips to a personal assistant for the day. Other hotel amenities include luxurious Frette linens and bathrobes, flat-screen televisions, alarm clocks with MP3 connectors, rooftop terrace and a walking track. Upon checkout, guests traveling by airplane receive a free Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) ticket to the airport and their airline boarding pass. A nightly wine reception is held in the lobby area of the hotel. Media contact: Jennifer Nichols, (415) 277-4912 or Jennifer@allisonpr.com. Public contact: Galleria Park Hotel, (800) 792-9639 or (415) 781-3060, www.galleriapark.com.

GLBT HISTORICAL SOCIETY PRODUCES GLBT VETERANS EXHIBIT

Out Ranks: GLBT Military History from World War II to the Iraq War will be the first exhibit in the country to explore the experiences of GLBT veterans. Slated to open in June at the GLBT Historical Society in San Francisco, the exhibit will have an extensive Web-based component and will be accompanied by programs and public forums. Out Ranks will draw detailed portraits of seven individuals who

served during major military conflicts from World War II to the present. Currently working with the Library of Congress Veterans History Project, Dr. Steve Estes, curator of the show, has collected more than 50 oral histories from GLBT veterans. Among the source materials are papers from U.S. Air Force TSgt. Leonard Matlovich, a Vietnam War veteran, who in 1975 fought for the right to serve as an openly gay man. Media contact: Don Romesburg, GLBT Historical Society, (415) 850-8580, donromesburg@earthlink.net. Public contact: GLBT Historical Society, (415) 777-5455, info@glbthistory.org, www.glbthistory.org.

INN AT UNION SQUARE AND HOTEL GRIFFON COMPLETE MAJOR UPGRADES

The Inn at Union Square, a San Francisco urban retreat known for its quiet intimacy and ideal location, recently completed a \$600,000 upgrade to its 30 guestrooms, lobby and lounge areas. Offering comfort and personal attention (each guest is greeted by name), the new Inn at Union Square features a wood-burning fireplace in the lounge on each level where complimentary champagne, hors d'oeuvres and freshly baked cookies are served nightly. Hotel Griffon, located along the waterfront in the Embarcadero, completely updated its interiors with new wall coverings, artwork, upholstery, carpet, lighting and window treatments. The 57-room, five-suite property is favored among travelers for its spectacular views of the San Francisco Bay from many of the rooms. All guestrooms feature flat screen TVs and a new signature bed package. Complimentary amenities include continental breakfast, nightly turndown service with a cookie, weekday morning Town Car service to the Financial District and high-speed wireless Internet access. Media contact: Nancy Uber, (415) 672-2950, nancy@nupr.com. Public contacts: Inn at Union Square, (800) 288-4346 or (415) 397-4910, www.unionsquare.com; Hotel Griffon, (800) 321-2201 or (415) 495-2100, www.hotelgriffon.com.

JOIE DE VIVRE HOSPITALITY RENOVATES JAPANTOWN PROPERTY

Under the management Joie de Vivre Hospitality, the Best Western Miyako Inn in San Francisco's Japantown is undergoing a dramatic transformation scheduled for completion by June 2007. The hotel's new design takes inspiration from contemporary Japanese culture, featuring the bright colors, modern embellishments and artistic styling found in Japanese anime, manga and street fashion. The renovated hotel will operate under the new name Hotel Tomo and will exude practical comfort with quirky details such as a game lounge with PS3 and bean bag chairs, Geo-Dome external meeting space and eclectic vending machines. Acknowledging its location as a cornerstone of Japantown and San Francisco's Fillmore Street shopping corridor, Hotel Tomo will be the ultimate destination for those wanting cutting edge style at a great price. Media contact: Dawn Shalhoup, Joie de Vivre Hospitality, (415) 773-1067, dawns@jdvhospitality.com, www.jdvhospitality.com. Public contact: Derek Banderas, Hotel Tomo, (415) 921-4000, dbanderas@jdvhospitality.com, www.jdvhospitality.com.

PODCASTS AVAILABLE ON SAN FRANCISCO CVB WEB SITE

Discover San Francisco in a whole new way. The San Francisco Convention & Visitors Bureau Web site now features podcasts from more than a dozen of San Francisco's top attractions. Learn about the latest research and exhibitions from prominent museums such as the California Academy of Sciences and the de Young Museum. Or, take an audio walking tour of the City's hottest spots from StrollSanFrancisco.com. There is a podcast available in most subject interests for visitors. Podcasts are free and easy to upload on to any computer or MP3 Player. Media contact: Tanya Houseman, San Francisco Convention & Visitors Bureau, (415) 227-2651, thouseman@sfcvb.org, www.onlyinsanfrancisco.com. Public contact: San Francisco Convention & Visitors Bureau, www.sfcvb.org/travel_media/podcasts.asp.

RAMADA PLAZA ON MARKET STREET BECOMES HOTEL WHITCOMB—SAN FRANCISCO

On March 6, 2007 the Ramada Plaza on Market Street was "reborn" as the Hotel Whitcomb—San Francisco, the hotel's original name when it opened in 1916. The 459-room Hotel Whitcomb—San Francisco includes a fine dining restaurant, cocktail lounge and more than 17,000 square feet of meeting and banquet space. Although recently renovated, the hotel will undergo an additional \$5 million in phased upgrades. Rich in history, the building the hotel occupies served as a temporary City Hall after the 1906 San Francisco earthquake. The Hotel Whitcomb joins more than 200 hotels, inns and resorts across the United States that are recognized by Historic Hotels of America for preserving and maintaining their historic integrity, architecture and ambiance. Media contacts: Gary Kohler, Hotel Whitcomb—San Francisco, (415) 487-4460, gkohler@hotelwhitcomb.com, or Mary Billingsley, Historic Hotels of America, (202) 588-6061, pr@historichotels.org, www.hotelwhitcomb.com. Public contact: Hotel Whitcomb—San Francisco, (415) 628-8000, www.hotelwhitcomb.com.

ROSS VALLEY PLAYERS PRESENTS TWO SUMMER PRODUCTIONS

The Ross Valley Players, an award-winning semi-professional theater company in Marin County, continues its 76th season with two summer productions: *The Underpants*, on stage from May 11–June 17, 2007; and *Fully Committed*, running from July 13–August 19, 2007. Ross Valley Players' productions are presented at The Barn Theatre located at the Marin Art & Garden Center in Marin. Theatre tickets are \$20 for adults, and \$17 for seniors age 62+ and children age 17 or younger. Thursday shows are \$16 for everyone, no other discounts apply. Media contact: Kim Taylor, Ross Valley Players, (415) 897-7772, KimTaylorpr@aol.com, www.rossvalleyplayers.com. Public contact: Ross Valley Players, (415) 456-9555, www.rossvalleyplayers.com.

NEW EXHIBITS AT SAN FRANCISCO ART MUSEUMS

The San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMOMA) and the de Young Museum are running two iconic exhibits that celebrate two artists who've made profound impacts on modern art. Picasso and American Art runs through May 28 at SFMOMA. Approximately 40 works by Picasso are on display alongside more than 100 works by artists such as Jackson Pollock and Jasper Johns that examine Picasso's role in the development of American art in the 20th century. At the de Young Museum, Vivienne Westwood—36 Years in Fashion runs through June 10. The retrospective exhibition was organized by London's Victoria and Albert Museum, and is the only U.S. stop on an international tour. The show honors Westwood's 40-year career of fearless non-conformity and singular sources of inspiration often found in the past. Media contacts: Libby Garrison, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, (415) 357-4177, lgarrison@sfmoma.org, www.sfmoma.org; Mary Jo Bowling, de Young Museum, (415) 750-3553, mbowling@famsf.org, www.famsf.org. Public contacts: San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, (415) 357-4000, www.sfmoma.org; de Young Museum, (415) 863-3330, www.famsf.org.

SAN FRANCISCO OPERA PRESENTS 2007 SUMMER SEASON

The San Francisco Opera this summer will feature new co-productions of Mozart's Don Giovanni starring baritone Mariusz Kwiecien; Richard Strauss's Der Rosenkavalier with mezzo-soprano Joyce DiDonato making her role debut as Octavian, Miah Persson making her Company debut as Sophie, and soprano Soile Isokoski making her Company debut as The Marschallin; and the San Francisco Opera premiere of Gluck's Iphigénie en Tauride. The San Francisco Opera will also present free productions, including an outdoor concert in San Francisco's Dolores Park on May 27 featuring the San Francisco Opera Orchestra; the annual Merola in the Gardens on July 29, featuring singers from the Merola Opera Program at Yerba Buena Gardens; Opera at Stern Grove on August 19; and a performance in association with the San Francisco LGBT Pride Celebration in June. Media contact: Will Hamilton, San Francisco Opera, (415) 565-6470,

whamilton@sfoopera.com, www.sfoopera.com. Public contact: San Francisco Opera, (415) 864-3330, www.sfoopera.com.

SFO OPENS 60-MINUTE PARKING LOT

Gone are the days of circling San Francisco International Airport (SFO) when picking up arriving passengers. SFO has created a free 60-minute cell phone "waiting" lot that allows people to wait for friends and family to emerge curbside rather than circling the airport. This new parking lot also reduces vehicle traffic outside the terminals and baggage claim areas. Just a three-minute drive from the terminal, the cell phone lot is accessible from the San Bruno Avenue exit on U.S. 280, near the Long Term Parking Garage. Media contact: Michael McCarron, San Francisco International Airport, (650) 821-4000, michael.mccarron@flysfo.com, www.flysfo.com. Public contact: San Francisco International Airport, (650) 821-8211, www.flysfo.com.

SHAKESPEARE SANTA CRUZ PRESENTS FOUR PLAYS

Shakespeare Santa Cruz will perform four plays in repertory from July 17–September 2 at University of California, Santa Cruz. The natural beauty of the outdoor Sinsheimer-Stanley Festival Glen redwood forest amphitheater will play host to Shakespeare's "Much Ado About Nothing" and "The Tempest." The indoor Theatre Arts Mainstage will be the setting for the classic Irish plays, Samuel Beckett's "Endgame" and "Playboy of the Western World" by John Millington Synge. Shakespeare Santa Cruz has been entertaining audiences for 25 years. Programs are suitable for families. Tickets are priced from \$22–\$40 for adults and \$10 for children. Media contact: Dana Werdmuller, Shakespeare Santa Cruz, (831) 459-3160, dwerdmul@ucsc.edu. Public contact: Shakespeare Santa Cruz, (831) 459-2121, <http://shakespearesantacruz.org>.

SIX FLAGS MARINE WORLD BECOMES SIX FLAGS DISCOVERY KINGDOM

A stunning transformation reveal thrills by land, sea and sky at Six Flags Marine World, America's original combination wildlife park, oceanarium and theme park. The park, newly branded Six Flags Discovery Kingdom (SFDK), will let guests experience a one-of-a-kind adventure featuring a

wide range of thrilling experiences, from interactions with exotic land animals and majestic marine life to rides and attractions that will delight families and guests of all ages. Guests will find the park classified into three fun-filled areas: Land, Sea and Sky. Each area is designed to foster physical and emotional discovery in a dynamic setting. The park's attractions, stunning shows, strolling performers and animal interactions will reflect the park's new name and identity. Media contact: Nancy Chan, Six Flags Discovery Kingdom, (707) 556-5227, nchan@sftp.com, www.sixflags.com. Public contact: General information, (707) 643-6722, www.sixflags.com.

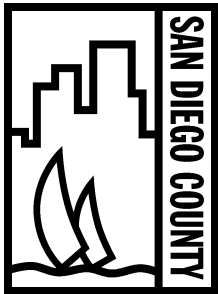
GREEN TOURISM IN SAN FRANCISCO GOES RETRO

Experience San Francisco from the backseat of a custom-built, pre-1930's touring car with Mr. Toad's Tours. The fleet of touring cars run on propane and include four 10-passenger vehicles: 1929 Model A Woodie, 1912 Rambler, 1918 Packard "Toadster" Woodie, and an authentic 1924 Yellowstone bus. Visitors can choose from the 80-minute "Hop Around the City" tour, the 2 ½ hour "Postcard San Francisco" tour, or the 75-minute "San Francisco by Night" tour. All tours are enthusiastically narrated and highlight San Francisco's history and popular attractions and landmarks. Media contact: Charles Lundquist, Mr. Toad's Tours, (650) 401-7708, Charlie@mrtoadstours.com, www.mrtoadstours.com. Public contact: Mr. Toad's Tours (650) 401-7708 or (877) 4MR-TOAD (877-467-8623), www.mrtoadstours.com.

NEW STARS DESCEND ON WAX MUSEUM AT FISHERMAN'S WHARF

The Wax Museum at Fisherman's Wharf has added new stars and other public personalities to its collection of more than 250 wax portraits. The Wax Museum this spring will introduce a diverse group of popular favorites. Hollywood glamour is well-represented with Halle Berry and Salma Hayek in dazzling contrast to the girl-next-door perkiness of Reese Witherspoon. Adventure heroes Mel Gibson and Harrison Ford join a throng of Hollywood hunks such as Johnny Depp, Tom Cruise, Russell Crow and George Clooney. We pay tribute to the legendary San Francisco musical icon and philanthropist Carlos Santana. With the closure of Movieland Wax Museum in

Southern California, dozens of popular and revered "stars" relocated to the Wax Museum at Fisherman's Wharf in San Francisco. The museum's Chamber of Horrors made room for "Psycho," "Phantom of the Opera," "House of Wax" and other popular film chillers. Comedians Abbott & Costello, the Three Stooges, The Marx Brothers, W.C. Fields and Lucille Ball live up the show along with action heroes Jackie Chan and Bruce Lee. Latino stars Cantinflas, Julio Iglesias, Christina Saregui, Gloria Estefan and Celia Cruz join the cast, as well as many other Hollywood celebrities including James Dean and the Olsen twins. Media contact: Jeanette Guire, Wax Museum at Fisherman's Wharf, (415)202-0416, jeanette@waxmuseum.com, www.waxmuseum.com. Public contact: Rodney Fong, Wax Museum at Fisherman's Wharf, (415) 202-0436, Rodney@waxmuseum.com, www.waxmuseum.com.



**FOUR SEASONS
RESORT AVIARA
EXPANDS
MEETING SPACE**

The Four Seasons Resort Aviara in Carlsbad completed its \$7 million catering space expansion in

December 2006. The expansion, which includes three social rooms and two outdoor terraces that feature stone fireplaces and a fountain laid with Spanish tiles, brings the resort's hotel function space to 77,000 square feet. The new space displays a California Spanish Colonial design with furniture pieces in shades of tan and coffee, and carpeting patterned after a traditional Spanish Colonial tile with warm tones of ochre, celadon, crimson, teal, and umber. The Four Seasons Resort Aviara can accommodate groups of up to 600. Media contact: Tony Pistillo, Four Seasons Resort Aviara, (760) 603-6848, tony.pistillo@fourseasons.com. Public contact: Four Seasons Resort Aviara, (760) 603-6800, www.fourseasons.com/aviara.

**GASLAMP QUARTER VIP SHOPPING
CARD NOW AVAILABLE**

San Diego's Gaslamp Quarter, Hilo Hattie Hawaiian store and local Gaslamp Quarter businesses have partnered to create the free Gaslamp VIP Shopping Card that is distributed to San Diego's cruise ship visitors each Tuesday. The Hilo Hattie shuttle picks up cruise passengers from 9:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. from the Broadway Pier cruise ship terminal and drives them to Hilo Hattie in the Gaslamp Quarter. Upon arrival at Hilo Hattie, visitors receive the Gaslamp VIP Shopping Card for discounts and special offers at Hilo Hattie and other shops and boutiques in the Gaslamp. The Gaslamp VIP Shopping Card is also a self-guided shopping tour of the Gaslamp. The Gaslamp has over 80 retail stores in a 16.5 block historic district featuring 96 historic buildings. The Gaslamp VIP Shopping Card is not restricted to cruise ship passengers and is available to the traveling public at Hilo Hattie throughout the year. Media contact: Dan Flores, Gaslamp Quarter Association, (619) 233-5227, dan@gaslamp.org. Public contact: Gaslamp Quarter Association, (619) 233-5227, info@gaslamp.org, www.gaslamp.org.

**SAN DIEGO HARBOR EXCURSION
OFFERS NATURE CRUISES**

During San Diego Harbor Excursion's new Nature Cruises, visitors sail into Mexican waters to explore Los Coronados Islands, located 14 miles south of Point Loma. This fully guided, 5 ½-hour tour takes up to 120 guests for an up-close look of kelp forests, dolphins, whales, sea lions, up to 80 varieties of sea birds and other marine life, and an elephant seal rookery. The cruise features indoor and outdoor seating and a full galley offering beverages and hot food made to order. The cruise sails Thursday—Sunday, from 10:15 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. Tickets are \$50 for adults, \$40 for children aged 4–12, and \$45 for seniors and members of the military. Media contact: Marla Durham, San Diego Harbor Excursion, (619) 522-6164, marla@sdhe.com. Public contact: San Diego Harbor Excursion, (619) 234-4111, www.sdhe.com.

**SAN DIEGO MUSEUM OF MAN
EXPLORES HOLY LAND**

The San Diego Museum of Man is joining forces with the Israel Museum, a renowned facility dedicated to art and archaeology, and the National Geographic Society for the exhibit "Journey to the Copper Age: Pre-Biblical Archaeology in the Holy Land." Opening June 16, 2007, "Journey to the Copper Age" will examine an extraordinary time in human history as seen in the Holy Land, an area today known as Israel and Jordan. The exhibit will look at how metal production, improved agricultural technology, domesticated animals, and the development of cemeteries and temples in the Holy Land contributed to the emergence of new social groups in the region. The show will include 50 original artifacts that have never been out of Israel, such as effigy figures, grinding slabs and copper weapons, and full color photographs by National Geographic photographer Kenneth Garrett. Media contact: Sydnie Moore, PR consultant, (619)283-8896, moore2com@aol.com. Public contact: San Diego Museum of Man, (619) 239-2001, www.museumofman.org.

SAN DIEGO NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM

The San Diego Natural History Museum (SDNHM) welcomes a new permanent exhibition, "Fossil Mysteries." From dinosaurs to mammoths, discover the rich 75-million-year fossil history of Southern California and the Baja California, Mexico peninsula. In this major exhibition created by SDNHM, visitors can play the role of paleontologist: ponder a mystery, examine the strong fossil evidence from the Museum's collection, and use scientific tools to discover answers. From June 29 through December 31, 2007, the largest, most comprehensive exhibition of the Dead Sea Scrolls ever assembled will be on display. Created and assembled by the SDNHM, the exhibition includes authentic Dead Sea Scrolls, ancient illuminated manuscripts, artifacts, landscape and aerial photography, and interactive displays about science, discovery, and exploration. The Dead Sea Scrolls, objects of great mystery, intrigue and significance, are widely acknowledged to be among the greatest archaeological treasures ever discovered. Tickets for "Dead Sea Scrolls" are not included in regular Museum admission. Media contact: Jessica Holmes Chatigny, San Diego Natural History Museum, (619) 255-0241,

jchatigny@sdnhm.org, www.sdnhm.org.
Public contact: San Diego Natural History Museum, (619) 232-3821, admissions@sdnhm.org, www.sdnhm.org.

SAN DIEGO ZOO'S WILD ANIMAL PARK ADDS THREE PROGRAMS

The San Diego Zoo's Wild Animal Park has introduced three new visitor experiences in time for summer. The Journey Into Africa tour replaces the historic Wgasa Bush Line Railway tour after more than 30 years in service. In Journey Into Africa, visitors will ride the open-air African Express vehicle around the perimeter of expansive African field enclosures totaling 213 acres. The Africa Express runs on bio-diesel fuel. The new experience will bring riders eye-level with animals, such as white rhinoceros, Cape buffalo, giraffe, and African crowned cranes. Also, two new live production shows are entertaining visitors in Nairobi Village. In Animal Trackers, two adventurers set out to explore Africa, only to find animals stowed away in their crates of equipment. The show is full of comedy and calamity as animals from around the world appear on stage and in the audience. At the Tembo Stadium, Experience Africa enlists guests into its ranks as African tribesman and their animal puppets try to end a drought. Audience members may be recruited to become part of the onstage orchestra while kids perform a ceremonial rain dance. Media contact: Yadira Galindo, Zoological Society of San Diego, (619) 685-3291, ygalindo@sandiegozoo.org. Public contact: San Diego Zoo's Wild Animal Park, (760) 747-8702, www.wildanimalpark.org.



BRIDGE HOUSE BED & BREAKFAST OPENS IN REDDING
Redding's newest B&B, Bridge House Bed & Breakfast, is

located in Historic Downtown Redding with views of the Sacramento River. The four-room inn is a quaint 1930's style cottage with individually decorated guestrooms and a fitness room with a treadmill and Bow Flex free weight system. Each guestroom is named for a historical bridge in Redding, and features free wireless Internet access, cable TV, and an iHome system for iPods. Rooms

are priced from \$95 per night. Media contact: Karen Whitaker, Shasta Cascade Wonderland Association, (530) 365-7500, karen@shastacascade.org, www.shastacascade.org. Public contact: Janelle Pierson, Bridge House Bed & Breakfast, (530) 247-7177, www.reddingbridgehouse.com.

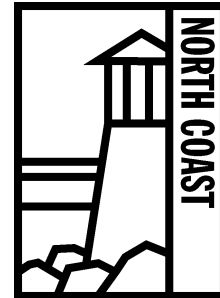
NEW TRAIL BROCHURE HIGHLIGHTS EXTENDED KESWICK TRAIL

Whether you're in the mood for a leisurely stroll in the fresh mountain air, or a quick trot on horseback, the new and improved Sacramento River Rail-Trail has something for everyone. The Bureau of Land Management's new free trail brochure follows the course of Keswick Reservoir and the old rail line in Shasta County, and the Sacramento River Trail that will soon connect Redding to Shasta Dam. The nine-mile, nearly flat, dirt and gravel rail-trail is open year-round to hikers, joggers, horseback riders, and bicyclists. Dogs on a leash are welcome, and free parking is available at all trailheads. Media contact: Karen Whitaker, Shasta Cascade Wonderland Association, (530) 365-7500, karen@shastacascade.org, www.shastacascade.org. Public contact: Bill Kuntz, Bureau of Land Management—Redding Field Office, (530) 224-2100, www.ca.blm.gov/redding.

TURTLE BAY EXPLORATION PARK UNVEILS SUMMER EXHIBITS

Summer takes flight at Turtle Bay Exploration Park in Redding with a new seasonal exhibition, Wings of Summer: Birds and Butterflies. The exhibition includes a 1,110-square foot walk-in aviary with hundreds of colorful, exotic birds, including three varieties of Australian birds: Eastern rosellas, grass parakeets and cockatiels. Wings of Summer is an interactive aviary that will allow visitors to feed and touch the birds. The popular Butterfly! exhibit returns for a ninth season to enchant visitors in the beautiful butterfly garden featuring thousands of live butterflies. The aviary and butterfly garden open May 1, 2007. In Turtle Bay's McConnell Arboretum & Gardens, Rock Penjing, is an elegant Chinese intersection of art, nature and horticulture. These miniature masterpieces capture that country's soaring mountains and unique greenery. Rock Penjing will be on display in the Arboretum's Pacific Rim Garden

from May 18–October 21, 2007. Media contact: Angela Torretta, Turtle Bay Exploration Park, (530) 242-3143, atorretta@turtlebay.org, www.turtlebay.org. Public contact: Turtle Bay Exploration Park, (800) 887-8532, (530) 243-8850, info@turtlebay.org, www.turtlebay.org.



HISTORIC BRANNAN COTTAGE INN COMPLETES PHASE I RENOVATION

The Brannan Cottage Inn in Calistoga, at the top of the Napa Valley, completed

Phase I of its two phase renovation project in December 2006. Phase I included a new roof for the entire facility, replacement of the wrap-around porch, and installation of fireplaces and skylights in five guest rooms. Brannan Cottage Inn's main building was originally constructed in 1860 as part of Sam Brannan's Calistoga Hot Springs Resort. The property was converted into a B&B in 1985 after a major restoration project earned the property recognition on the National Register of Historic Places. Phase II of the B&Bs renovation will begin in November 2007. Media and public contact: Doug Cook, Brannan Cottage Inn, (707) 942-4200, brannancottageinn@sbcglobal.net, www.brannancottageinn.com.

JACUZZI WINERY OPENING IN SONOMA VALLEY

The Jacuzzi Family Vineyards' Jacuzzi Winery is scheduled to open by June 2007 in the Carneros region south of Sonoma Valley. The new 18,000-square foot, rustic-Italian stone structure is inspired by the Jacuzzi family home in Udine, Italy and honors the family of Italian immigrants who came to America in the early 1900s. The winery sits on 190 acres in the Sonoma-Carneros appellation; Jacuzzi Family Vineyards also owns seven vineyard ranches in the Sonoma Coast appellation, making it one of the largest wine growers in the region. Grapes are grown organically without pesticides, petroleum-based fertilizers or herbicides. Media contacts: Tim Zahner or Keri Hanson, Sonoma County Tourism Bureau, (707) 522-5810,

tzahner@sonomacounty.com, or
khanson@sonomacounty.com. Public
 contact: Jacuzzi Family Vineyards,
 (707) 940-4031, www.jacuzziwines.com.

KUNDE WINERY OFFERS FREE VINEYARD TOURS

Kunde Winery in Kenwood is offering visitors insight into its progressive sustainable winegrowing practice with its new Sustainable Winegrowing Hikes and Green Eco-Tours program. The guided Sustainable Winegrowing Hikes are free and wind through the winery's 1,850-acre vineyard of distinct ecosystems that each contribute to the sustainable winegrowing process. The moderately strenuous hike is approximately four hours. Sustainable Winegrowing Hikes are scheduled for May 12, June 9, July 14, August 11, September 8, October 13, November 10, and December 8, 2007. Reservations are not required. Kunde's Green Eco-Tours include lunch with fourth generation winemaker Jeff Kunde, tastings, and a four-mile guided, educational hike through the vineyard. Kunde's Green Eco-Tours are \$75 per person, reservations required. Green Eco-Tours are scheduled for May 5, June 2, August 25, and October 20, 2007. Media contacts: Tim Zahner or Keri Hanson, Sonoma County Tourism Bureau, (707) 522-5810, tzahner@sonomacounty.com, or khanson@sonomacounty.com. Public contact: Kunde Estate Hospitality Department, (707) 833-5501, x331, www.kunde.com.

TOUR SONOMA COUNTY LAVENDER AND HONEY FARM

The Lavender Bee Farm in Petaluma will be offering guided tours of the three-acre farm this summer. The guided tour includes a stroll among the farm's 5,000 lavender plants, tips and suggestions for growing lavender, bee keeping demonstrations at the bee observation hive, honey tasting and lavender tea and lemonade. Lavender Bee Farm lavender is grown without chemical fertilizers or pesticides. Tours are \$5 per person. Visitors can also visit the farm's gift shop for honey and lavender products such as culinary lavender, essential oils, beeswax soap, and home accessories. Media contacts: Tim Zahner or Keri Hanson, Sonoma County Tourism Bureau, (707) 522-5810, tzahner@sonomacounty.com, or

khanson@sonomacounty.com.
 Public contact: Lavender Bee Farm,
 (707) 789-0554,
lavenderbeefarm@sbcglobal.net,
www.lavenderbeefarm.com.

MARIN SHAKESPEARE COMPANY PRESENTS 2007 SEASON

The award-winning Marin Shakespeare Company will present its 2007 season from July 6 through September 29, 2007. The outdoor festival features three plays presented under the stars at Dominican University of California's Forest Meadows Amphitheatre in San Rafael, California. The 2007 season features "The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (Abridged)" directed by Robert Currier and starring Marin Shakespeare Company favorite Darren Bridgett. Opening in August will be "Henry IV, Part 1" and "Henry IV, Part 2" in repertory, directed by Robert Currier and Rob Clare. The Bay Area's own Jarion Monroe will be featured in the title role. Following a national search, MSC is proud to introduce Stephen Reynolds of Los Angeles as Falstaff and Grant Goodman of New York as Prince Hal. Guest Director Rob Clare is currently a text consultant with the Royal Shakespeare Company. Marin Shakespeare Company offers Family Day matinees, senior discounts, "Pay What You Will," and student matinee performances, as well as free pre-show conversations. Media contact: Kim Taylor, Publicist, KimTaylorpr@aol.com, (415) 897-7772. Public contact: Marin Shakespeare Company, (415) 499-4488, www.marinshakespeare.org.

RENOVATIONS COMPLETE AT MELITTA STATION INN B&B

The Melitta Station Inn Bed & Breakfast in Santa Rosa will open its new luxury Creekside Suite in April 2007. The king-size suite was designed to be wheelchair accessible and features a double-door entryway and five-foot shower stall. The spacious suite also features a lounge and mini-kitchen. Other renovations at the B&B include a spa facility with a 40-jet hot tub and on-site massage services; an exercise area and a 400-square foot meeting facility for small groups. Wireless Internet connection is available. The Melitta Station Inn B&B offers luxury English country cottage hospitality and gourmet breakfasts. Media contacts: Tim Zahner or Keri Hanson, Sonoma

County Tourism Bureau, (707) 522-5810, tzahner@sonomacounty.com, or khanson@sonomacounty.com. Public contact: Melitta Stations Inn B&B, (800) 504-3099 or (707) 538-7712, info@melittastationinn.com, www.melittastationinn.com.



COURTYARD BY MARRIOTT OPENS IN MERCED

Marriott International, Inc. is scheduled to open the 90-room Courtyard by

Marriott Merced in May 2007. Courtyard by Marriott is located less than one mile from downtown, and near the Merced Municipal Airport, Mercy Medical Center Merced, Castle Air Museum, and the University of California Merced. Rates begin at \$139 per night weekday and \$99 weekend. Courtyard by Marriott will feature a business library with high-speed data ports and ergonomic chairs; a pantry-style, 24-hour food and beverage area called The Market; and a lounge area where guests can work, meet and dine in a relaxing setting. The three-story hotel will also offer 660 square feet of meeting space to accommodate small meetings and functions of up to 50 people, Courtyard Cafe restaurant serving breakfast, an indoor swimming pool with whirlpool spa, exercise room, guest laundry, and manager's reception Tuesday and Wednesday evenings. Media and public contact: Sean Williams, Courtyard by Marriott—Merced, (209) 725-1221, cy.mcccygm@marriott.com, www.marriott.com.

EXPRESSJET AIRLINES OFFERS SERVICE FROM FRESNO

ExpressJet Airlines is now offering non-stop service from Fresno Yosemite International Airport to LA/Ontario and San Diego. With its entrance into the Fresno market, ExpressJet is investing more than \$400,000 in airport facilities and equipment. ExpressJet's fleet of 50-seat Embraer ERJ-145 aircraft is configured with no middle seat, assigning every ExpressJet passenger a seat on the aisle, window, or both. ExpressJet also offers valet carry-on bag service, free XM® Satellite radio, and complimentary recognized

name-brand snacks with full-service meal options on longer flights. Media contact: Kristy Nicholas, ExpressJet Airlines, (832) 353-3333, expressjet.press@expressjet.com, www.xjet.com. Public contact: ExpressJet Airlines, (888) 958-9538 or (832) 353-3333, www.xjet.com.

FARM TOURS IN FRESNO COUNTY

Four innovative farmwomen in eastern Fresno County have joined together to offer delicious agriculture adventures for groups and individuals. Gayle Willems from River Valley Berry Farms, Silva Esajian from Luke's Almond Acres, Rosemary Nightingale from the Squaw Valley Herb Gardens and Lavone Sawatzky from Wiebe Farms will offer farm tours every Saturday in June filled with homegrown hospitality, education, country fun, and tasty treats, including lunch in a beautiful, historic barn. Variations of this tour will operate year-round showcasing seasonal specialties of California's Central Valley. Tours can be customized to fit group needs. Media and public contact: Rosemary Nightingale, Squaw Valley Herb Gardens, (800) 579-8043 or (559) 332-2909, rosemary@squawvalleyherbgardens.com, www.squawvalleyherbgardens.com.

HAMPTON INN AND SUITES OPENS IN WOODLAND

Visitors to Yolo County now have a new hotel to choose from when making their vacation plans. The new Hampton Inn and Suites in Woodland is located off Interstate 5, minutes from Sacramento International Airport and historic downtown Woodland. The hotel offers 71 rooms and 32 suites, a conference room for up to 75 people, heated outdoor swimming pool, exercise facility, complimentary breakfast, complimentary USA Today newspaper, 24-hour business center and a 24-hour gift/newsstand. Media contact: Yvette Mulholland, Yolo County Visitors Bureau, (877) 713-2847 or (530) 297-1900, media@yolocvb.org, www.yolocvb.org. Public contact: Tiffany Dozier, Yolo County Visitors Bureau, (877) 713-2847, (530) 297-1900, info@yolocvb.org, www.yolocvb.org.

STINGRAY BAY: A TOUCHING EXPERIENCE AT FRESNO CHAFFEE ZOO

Just in time for a hot summer, a cool new seasonal exhibit is running through Labor Day 2007 at Fresno Chaffee Zoo. Stingray Bay: A Touching Experience houses more than a dozen rays, including cownose rays (*Rhinoptera bonasus*) and southern stingrays (*Dasyatis americana*) found in the Atlantic Ocean. Visitors to Stingray Bay will be able to touch and feed the rays as the animals swim in a specially constructed 14,500-gallon saltwater pool. Zoo staff and volunteers will be present at the exhibit to enhance the learning experience about these mild-tempered creatures that pose no threat to visitors. Fresno Chaffee Zoo is open daily from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. General admission is \$7 for adults, and \$3.50 for children ages 2-11 and senior citizens age 62 or older. Admission is free to children under age 2 and Fresno Chaffee Zoo members. Admission to Stingray Bay is an additional \$1 for non-members, and the cost to feed the rays is \$1. Media contact: Patty Peters, Fresno Chaffee Zoo, (559) 498-5936, ppeters@fresnochaffeezoo.com, www.fresnochaffeezoo.com. Public contact: Fresno Chaffee Zoo, (559) 498-5910, www.fresnochaffeezoo.com.



SIERRA SAM'S GOLD RUSH ADVENTURE EXPLORES GOLD COUNTRY

A new San Francisco tour company is offering a unique excursion to Gold Rush-era sites and landmarks. Old Town Sacramento, the State Capitol

Museum in Sacramento, and the historic town of Coloma located in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada Mountains where gold was discovered in 1848 are highlighted stops on the Gold Rush Tour. Guided by "Sierra Sam," the adventure begins in San Francisco with a maximum of 12 guests per tour and includes a continental breakfast, a movie on the Gold Rush and time for gold panning and shopping at various locations. The cost for the tour is \$139/adult and \$135/children under 13 and includes transportation, an adventure guide, all park and museum fees and lunch in Sacramento. Tours are approximately nine hours and leave San Francisco between 8:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. Media contact: Tom Lipke,

Sam's Gold Rush Adventure Tours, (925) 202-2222, tomlipke@hotmail.com. Public contact: Sierra Sam's Gold Rush Adventure Tours, (415) 677-2222, www.goldrushadventure.com.

CAL EXPO WATER PARK RECEIVES EXTREME MAKEOVER

Raging Waters Sacramento, formerly known as Waterworld USA, is scheduled to reopen in May 2007 after a multi-million dollar investment in park improvements and new attractions. The park's newest water thrill ride, Dragon's Den, will drop adventure seekers at heart-pounding speeds for nearly five stories while spiraling through enclosed tunnels into a narrow crevice that finally shoots the two-person raft into a clear pool of water. Other capital improvements include resurfacing the water slides for a smoother and faster ride, new bathrooms and changing facilities, and improved systems to ensure excellent water quality throughout the park. The park features more than 25 exhilarating water attractions like Cannonball Falls and Hurricane, breath-taking slides including Cliffhanger Speed Slides, pools and activities for children and adults. Park goers in the mood for more chill than thrills can cool out in the tranquil waters of the Calypso Cooler Lazy River or play in Hooks Lagoon, a 5-story water kingdom with water slides, secret tubes and hundreds of water activities. Raging Water Sacramento, located at the Cal Expo Fairgrounds, is open from mid-May to mid-September. Media contacts: Cain Galletta, Ink Foundry PR, (323) 931-7600, x201, carin@inkfoundry.com or Jennifer Petro, Ink Foundry PR, (323) 931-7600, x204, jennifer@inkfoundry.com. Public contact: Raging Waters Sacramento, (916) 924-3747, www.rwsac.com.

SIERRA NEVADA LOGGING MUSEUM EXPLORES LUMBERING LEGACY

The Sierra Nevada Logging Museum in Calaveras County tells the fascinating story of logging and related industries from the time when gold was discovered in 1848 in California to the present day. The geographic scope of the Museum includes the 18 counties that comprise the Sierra Nevada mountain range, from Lassen County in the North to Kern County in the South. Museum exhibits highlight economic, technological, social, and cultural contributions made throughout

the region by logging and related industries. Interior displays include photos of historic logging, dioramas illustrating the evolution of logging, and a large collection of logging tools such as handsaws, drag saws and chainsaws, peevs and canthooks, broadaxes and felling axes. Outside, visitors will find interpretive trails that lead to impressive historic artifacts including a steam donkey engine that first operated in nearby Tuolumne County, a "two-man" sawmill, several enormous logging arches, and a Caterpillar tractor from the 1930s. Other trails link the Museum site with the nearby Stanislaus National Forest. The Museum is located in the community of White Pines, near the town of Arnold on State Highway 4. Media contact: Anna Davies, Calaveras Visitors Bureau, (209) 736-0049 or (800) 225-3764, info@gocalaveras.com, www.GoCalaveras.com. Public contact: Sierra Nevada Logging Museum, (209) 795-6782 or (209) 728-1407, www.sierraloggingmuseum.org.



MULTI-MILLION DOLLAR RENOVATION AT EMBASSY SUITES LAKE TAHOE

Embassy Suites Lake Tahoe Hotel & Ski Resort has undergone multi-million dollar renovations. The

property now has 10,000 square-feet of flexible meeting space, 2,500 square feet of which is new. Each bedroom in this 400-room, all-suite hotel has been luxuriously redecorated with the highest thread count linens and bedding packages, including mattress-top padding and by the end of 2007 all suites will have new mattresses. A new card key system has been installed to enhance safety and convenience for guests along with a heat-censored, infrared reader thermostat in all rooms to stabilize comfort and to encourage energy efficient practices. An elegant 4,212 square foot grand ballroom that can accommodate up to 440 guests joins the rejuvenated meeting facilities. Media contact: Jennifer Boyd, Weidinger Public Relations, (775) 588-2412, jennifer@weidingerpr.com. Public contact: Bill Cottrill, Embassy Suites Lake Tahoe Hotel & Ski Resort, (530) 544-5400, bill@embassytahoe.com, www.embassytahoe.com.

NEW SHUTTLE SERVICE OFFERED IN SEQUOIA NATIONAL PARK

Starting May 26, 2007 a new shuttle service will be offered in the Giant Forest area of Sequoia National Park. The park's Giant Forest is home to the world's largest tree, General Sherman Tree. Visitors will be able to ride the shuttle at no cost inside the park to see the spectacular General Sherman Tree, and many other attractions of Sequoia National Park. The shuttle will operate daily from Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day. Routes and service times are available online at www.nps.gov/seki. The City of Visalia is planning to connect with the Giant Forest shuttle with a shuttle service from various pickup points in Visalia. Media contact: Alexandra Picavet, Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks, (559) 713-4317, Alexandra.Picavet@nps.gov, www.nps.gov/seki. Public contact: Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks, (559) 565-3341, www.nps.gov/seki.

NORTHSTAR-AT-TAHOE MOUNTAIN BIKE PARK REOPENS

After a one year hiatus, Northstar-at-Tahoe Resort's mountain bike park, the largest in Northern California, will reopen on June 29, 2007 offering five new trail segments, two new trails, increased lift access with the addition of the Tahoe Zephyr Express, a new jump park, skills development areas, and LiveWire, the resort's first signature trail. LiveWire will be fully irrigated, at least 6 feet wide, and contain numerous tabletop jumps and berms. In the new skills development areas, less experienced riders will get started on log rides and other features that are lower to the ground. A new jump park will round out the experience. Northstar-at-Tahoe offers more than 100 miles of mountain bike trails via chairlift access for intermediate to advanced riders. Media contact: Jessica VanPernis, Northstar-at-Tahoe Resort, (530) 562-3866, jvanpernis@boothcreek.com, www.NorthstarAtTahoe.com. Public contact: Northstar-at-Tahoe Resort, (800) GO-NORTH (800-466-6784) or (530) 562-1010, www.NorthstarAtTahoe.com.

SEQUOIA HIGH SIERRA CAMP OFFERS DELUXE CAMPING

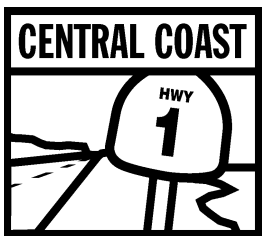
Outdoor enthusiasts who enjoy the idea of a wilderness camping experience, but prefer deluxe comforts such as steaming hot showers, gourmet cuisine, plush linens and feather-top beds are the target demographic for California's newest high country retreat. Located in the secluded backcountry of Sequoia National Forest, the Sequoia High Sierra Camp will open for its first official full season of operation from June 15–October 7, 2007. Set amid lush Red Fir and Lodgepole Pines at an elevation of 8,200 feet, Sequoia High Sierra Camp consists of 36 spacious canvas bungalows with upscale amenities. A professional executive chef will prepare three delicious meals a day made with fresh seasonal ingredients. For recreation, guests can enjoy on a multitude of scenic day hikes, or practice their cast in nearby creeks and mountain lakes. Sequoia High Sierra Camp is accessed by foot. Guests have the option of driving their vehicle to a trailhead and hiking an easy 1 mile to Camp, or hiking the full distance of 12 miles along a well-marked backcountry trail. Rates are \$250 per person, per night, and include accommodations and three daily meals. Media contact: Catherine Boire, CB Public Relations, (707) 255-5997, cboirepr@aol.com. Public contact: Sequoia High Sierra Camp, (901) 292-2640 or (866) 654-2877, info@sequoiahighsierracamp.com, www.sequoiahighsierracamp.com.

TAHOE WEB SITES HELPS TRAVEL PLANNERS

Vacation planners fine-tuning their Tahoe itinerary will find a wealth of information on two convenient Web sites: www.Tahoe360.com and www.BlueLakeTahoe.com. The new Tahoe360 features interactive maps, web cams, ski reports, trails, destinations, businesses, and restaurants with endless search capabilities. BlueLakeTahoe.com offers extensive listings of summer activities and places to visit all year long around South Shore Lake Tahoe. Media contact: Margaret Skillicorn, Weidinger Public Relations, (775) 588-8171, margaret@weidingerpr.com. Public contact: Bill Smaine, Tahoe360, (530) 573-0828, bill@tahoe360.com, www.tahoe360.com.

MOUNTAIN BIKE GEO-CACHING OFFERED AT TENAYA LODGE AT YOSEMITE

Tenaya Lodge at Yosemite, one of the first resorts to introduce geo-caching adventures, is offering a new geocaching program for mountain bikers. Using a GPS unit, riders search for hidden treasure in the Sierra National Forest surrounding the hotel. The caches are located along trails that wind through towering trees, creeks and mountain meadows. Tenaya Lodge is located just two miles from the southern entrance to Yosemite National Park, just a few minutes from the big trees of the Mariposa Grove. Tenaya's Geocaching Mountain Biking program will be offered through November 20, 2007 and is priced from \$229 person and includes two full-day mountain bike rentals, a GPS unit for two people to share on the geocaching trail, and a deluxe guestroom for two. Media contact: The Fontayne Group, (800) 841-0850 or (310) 821-4678, tenaya@fontayne.com. Public contact: Tenaya Lodge at Yosemite, (877) 322-5492 or (559) 253-2005, www.tenayalodge.com.



ASILOMAR CONFERENCE GROUNDS COMPLETES RENOVATION

Asilomar Conference Grounds, home to the world's

largest collection of Julia Morgan-designed Arts & Crafts architecture, has completed a \$1.2 million renovation to Morgan's Grace H. Dodge Chapel Auditorium. A team of architectural, environmental and historic building specialists collaborated on the project, guided by original structural drawings borrowed from the engineering library at California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo. Julia Morgan, California's first licensed female architect and designer of Hearst Castle, created Asilomar's original 15 structures between 1913 and 1928. The 196-seat, Craftsman-style Grace H. Dodge Chapel Auditorium is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The Grace H. Dodge Chapel Auditorium work is part of a multi-year, multi-million dollar historic renovation plan at Asilomar Conference Grounds. The Asilomar complex comprises 28 lodge buildings set on 103 acres of natural forest,

sand dunes and coastline on the tip of the Monterey Peninsula. The 314 guestrooms range from the original cozy cabin-like structures to contemporary rooms that may include fireplaces, private balcony or patio. All rooms feature private baths and scenic forest or ocean views. Accommodations are priced from \$133 per night, double occupancy, and include full breakfast. Media contact: Catherine Boire, CB Public Relations, (707) 255-5997, CBoirepr@aol.com. Public contact: Asilomar Conference Grounds, (888) 733-9005 or (831) 642-4242, www.visitasilomar.com.

DOWNTOWN PASO ROBLES WELCOMES NEW LUXURY HOTEL

Paso Robles welcomes a new downtown luxury property with the opening of Hotel Cheval in April 2007. Each of the hotel's 16 guestrooms features a California King bed with 400 thread-count sheets, down comforters and pillows; entertainment system with 37-inch LCD flat-screen TV and cable, DVD/CD players, and complimentary Internet access via WI-FI and in-room Ethernet connection. Hotel Cheval offers three guestroom categories—Classic, Deluxe and Luxury—with nightly rates ranging from an introductory \$195 weekday price to \$425 on weekends. In keeping with an equestrian theme, "cheval" is French for horse, the guestrooms are named after famous racehorses throughout history. Cozy windows seats, fireplaces, outdoor patios, fountains and European artifacts complement original artwork throughout the property. Guests can unwind in front of the fireplaces in the courtyard, curl up with a book in the library or enjoy a glass of wine in the Pony Club, the Parisian inspired horseshoe-shaped zinc bar. Complimentary carriage rides are offered on Friday and Saturday evenings with Chester, Hotel Cheval's Belgian draft horse. Media contact: Keelin Czelcz, Burditch Marketing Communications, (323) 932-6262, keelin@burditchmc.com, or Brian Garrido, (323) 932-6262, briang@burditchmc.com, www.burditchmc.com. Public contact: Judy Hudson, Hotel Cheval, (805) 226-9995, info@hotelcheval.com, www.hotelcheval.com.

NEW SPA SCHEDULED TO OPEN AT MADONNA INN

The Madonna Inn in San Luis Obispo is scheduled to open its new Madonna Spring & Spa by mid-summer. The spa project will feature a 90-foot long European-style pool designed in a configuration that allows for 50-foot lap swimming, and includes a 30-foot beach-style entry. Nestled against the hillside is a 25-foot cascading waterfall that flows into an enchanting lagoon below. Guests will be able to stroll through the pool area, walk across bridges and rock paths to a gazebo that cantilevers out over the lagoon, offering beautiful views of the city. Jetted spas will be designed in the Madonna Inn's signature rock facade providing a relaxing oasis for guests. Highlights of the spa are several treatment rooms, including two rooms for couples; a fitness room with the latest exercise equipment; and classes for private and group Gyrotonics, Pilates and Yoga in the "Energy Room." Media contact: Susie Kelly, (805) 543-3000, Susie@madonnainn.com. Public contact: Madonna Inn, (805) 543-3000, www.madonnainn.com.

WILD ABOUT OTTERS DEBUTS AT MONTEREY BAY AQUARIUM

Explore the fascinating world of otters at the new "Wild About Otters" exhibit at Monterey Bay Aquarium. The \$3.6 million exhibition includes five galleries and an intriguing array of live exhibits and interactive displays that feature resident California sea otters and 10 freshwater otters. The freshwater otters include six African spotted-necked otters and four Asian small-clawed otters in exhibits that represent the animals' native lake and river habitats. The Monterey Bay Aquarium is only one of five accredited aquariums and zoos in the United States to exhibit African spotted-necked otters. Interactive graphic panels tell the otters' personal stories through the use of caretaker's journals, still images, video clips, and other displays. Conservation messages about how lakes, rivers and oceans are interconnected are delivered in video clips that feature actor John Cleese. One colorful hands-on gallery introduces visitors to all 13 species of otters found throughout the world, from the giant otters of South America to North American river otters. "Wild About Otters" is scheduled to run into 2010. Media contact: Ken Peterson, Monterey Bay Aquarium, (831) 648-4922; kpeterson@mbayaq.org.

www.montereybayaquarium.org. Public contact: Monterey County Convention & Visitors Bureau, (831) 657-6400, info@mccvb.org, www.montereyinfo.org or www.montereybayaquarium.org.

PCPA THEATERFEST PRESENTS SUMMER SEASON

PCPA Theaterfest's summer 2007 schedule features a variety of productions ranging from bold contemporary works to an imaginative interpretation of a classic to rousing stagings of popular musicals. A nationally recognized resident theatre company, PCPA performs its summer season in two theatres on the campus of Allan Hancock College in Santa Maria, and under the stars at the glorious open-air Solvang Festival Theater. The summer opens with the award-winning Stephen Sondheim musical "Company in Concert" (June 14–July 15), which plays in rotating repertory with Oscar Wilde's irresistible farce "The Importance of Being Earnest" (June 22–July 14) in Solvang. Cole Porter's classic musical comedy "Kiss Me, Kate" (July 5–August 12) will play in Santa Maria and Solvang. A special limited engagement, the Central Coast premiere of Nicola McCartney's "Lifeboat" (July 19–28) will be performed in Santa Maria only. The season continues with Tom Stoppard's Tony Award-winning Best Play "The Real Thing" (August 2–September 14) and closes with the acclaimed musical satire "Urinetown the Musical" (August 17–September 23). "The Real Thing" and "Urinetown" will play in repertory during their Solvang engagement. Media contact: Michael French, PCPA Theaterfest, (805) 928-7731, x 4100, publicity@pcpa.org. Public contact: PCPA Theaterfest, (805) 922-8313, www.pcpa.org.

SANTA MARIA VALLEY DISCOVERY MUSEUM DEBUTS NEW EXHIBITS

The Santa Maria Valley Discovery Museum for children recently completed its new interactive exhibit, Trouble in the Tar Pits. The exhibit is hosted by Leander an extinct American lion who keeps kids on track with fun games and brain teasers. In Pit 21, fossils can be recovered, identified and deposited in a crate for scientific research. An interactive floor mat developed specifically for the Discovery Museum by Animocations provides the researcher the opportunity to learn about the tar pits

and associated animals. The museum is also celebrating another intriguing exhibit, Poop Deck! Part of a larger environmental exhibit funded by the Coastal Resource Enhancement Fund, Poop Deck! helps birding enthusiasts learn to name and identify local coastal and pelagic birds, understand their diet and match bird 'splay,' or bird poop, to the correct bird. Color, shape, and consistency all relate to identifying the bird, his diet and health. There's more description and detail than even the average 8 year old can imagine related to bird dejecta. The museum is located in Santa Maria and is open Monday–Saturday. Media and public contact: Santa Maria Valley Discovery Museum, (805) 928-8414, www.smvdiscoverymuseum.org.

NEW WILDERNESS EXHIBITION AT WILDLING ART MUSEUM

Based on the Wilderness River Expedition into the Boreal Forest, North America's largest uninterrupted forest, the Wildling Art Museum in Los Olivos this summer will exhibit "Visions of the Boreal Forest: Artists Deep in the Northern Wilderness" from June 27–September 9. The Wildling is the first museum in the country to host a preview of the full exhibition scheduled to open at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington D.C. in 2008. The exhibition will feature paintings, sketches, photographs, and information designed to raise awareness of the threats to this unique wilderness area. The group of artists, scientists, writers, and conservationists represented in the exhibition traveled by canoe in September 2006 for an 18-day, 140-mile river journey for inspiration. Admission is free to Museum members and children; a \$2 suggested donation is requested from all others. Media contact: Holly Cline, Wildling Art Museum, (805) 688-1082, holly@wildlingmuseum.org, www.wildlingmuseum.org. Public contact: Holly Cline, Wildling Art Museum, (805) 688-1082, info@wildlingmuseum.org, www.wildlingmuseum.org.

WOOLWORTH MUSEUM OPENS IN OXNARD

Remember America's original five and dime stores when Woolworth's was a household name? Oxnard has restored the memories of the past with a new museum—the only one of its kind in the world—to preserve Woolworth memorabilia. The Woolworth Museum, located in the original Woolworth Building in downtown Oxnard, is filled with information on previous employees, old products, menus, historical items, photographs, books, lunch counter items and much more. There is also a section of working, original old vending machines from the 1950s, and electromechanical games that still operate. The museum also houses a lunch counter deli called the Exper-Mental Café, which celebrates the past with its "The Jetsons" architectural style. Media contact: Janis Flippen, Janis Flippen Public Relations, (805) 389-9495, jflippenpr@adelphia.net. Public contact: Oxnard Convention & Visitors Bureau, (805) 385-7545; info@visitoxnard.com; www.visitoxnard.com.

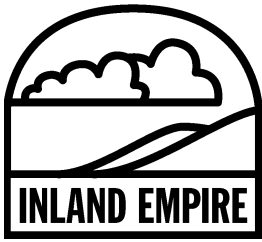


HOLIDAY INN PALM SPRINGS TO OPEN IN AUGUST

The Holiday Inn Palm Springs—City Center hotel is scheduled to open in August 2007.

Located only

five minutes from the Palm Springs International Airport and downtown Palm Springs, the hotel will feature 249 all-nonsmoking guest rooms and suites with either a patio or balcony overlooking the lush courtyard pool area or the beautiful San Jacinto Mountains. Facilities and services will include over 8,000 square feet of meeting and event space, full catering staff, convention services, a restaurant, lounge and bar, patio dining, cabana bar, Olympic-size swimming pool with two-heated whirlpools, Dive-In movies, fitness facility, complimentary airport and downtown shuttle, and pet-friendly accommodations. Priority Club Rewards benefits available to members. Media and public contact: Barbara Lyons, Holiday Inn Palm Springs—City Center, (760) 323-1711, blyons@hipalmsprings.com, www.holidayinn.com.



BIG BEAR OFFERS TRAVEL INSURANCE

The Big Bear Lake Resort Association (BBLRA) is now offering

travel insurance that provides protection for guests who need to cancel or interrupt their trip due to unforeseen circumstances. The plan covers cancellations and interruptions due to an accident, injury, illness or death before or during the trip. The insurance covers out-of-pocket costs for prepaid non-refundable vacation costs, deposits and cancellation fees. Also, the insurance provides coverage for lost, stolen or damaged sporting equipment, non-refundable lift tickets, lessons and rentals. Other benefits include roadside assistance, vehicle return, emergency medical transportation and 24-hour travel assistance. Travel insurance is available to all guests who book lodging through BBLRA's central reservations system online or by phone. The insurance cost is 6.5 percent of the total amount of the reservation, and is automatically included. Travel planners may accept or decline the insurance at the time of the booking. Media contact: Dan McKernan, Big Bear Lake Resort Association, (909) 866-6190, x235, dmckernan@bigbear.com. Public contact: Big Bear Lake Resort Association, (800) 4-BIG BEAR (800-424-4232) or (909) 866-6190, www.bigbear.com.

TEMECULA CREEK INN COMPLETES RENOVATION

Temecula Creek Inn, located in the heart of the Southern California wine country, recently completed a multi-million dollar renovation to its 130 guestrooms. Accommodations now feature custom furnishings that include pillow-top mattresses, leather easy chairs, wet bar with granite countertops, 42" plasma television and iPod-ready stereos. Design elements include crown moldings, custom carpeting and handcrafted lamps. Guestrooms also feature private patios furnished with comfortable lounge chairs with stunning views of the golf course. The expansive 300-acre Temecula Creek Inn blends the comfort of a casual California retreat with spectacular views of the San Jacinto

Mountains. As travelers enter the resort, they are welcomed by a wood-beamed porte-cochere, an inviting lobby appointed with rustic pine furniture, Native American art pottery, antique tribal weavings and limited edition sculptures. Media contact: Susan Bejeckian, SBPR, (626) 570-1051. Public contact: Temecula Creek Inn, (877) 517-1823 or (951) 694-1000, temeculacreekinn@jcsresorts.com, www.temeculacreekinn.com.



CA TOURISM BOOSTS ECONOMY, TRAVEL SPENDING UP SIX PERCENT

The California travel industry continues to boost the state's economy as figures for 2006 reflect an increase in direct travel spending. Total spending in California from visitors was \$93.8 billion in 2006, an increase of six percent from 2005 and the fourth straight year of positive growth. Over the past three years, travel spending in California has increased an average of 6.9 percent. The 2006 report, compiled by Portland-based Dean Runyan Associates, illustrates the economic impact of travel in California. According to the report, a substantial share of the increase in travel spending was due to higher airfares, room rates and gasoline prices. There were 30 million domestic air passenger visitor arrivals to and through California airports in 2006, approximately the same as last year. International visitors (visitors from overseas, Canada and Mexico) comprise a significant segment of total travel spending in California. In 2006, international visitors spent \$14.6 billion in California. This represents more than 15 percent of all travel spending in the state. During 2006, travel spending in California directly supported 928,700 jobs with earnings of \$28.5 billion, which is up slightly from last year. Travel spending generated the greatest number of jobs in arts, entertainment and recreation (233,700 jobs), food service (274,700) and accommodations (203,700). Travel spending in California during 2006 also generated \$2.1 billion in local taxes and \$3.5 billion in state taxes. In 2006, every \$100 of travel spending generated \$30.36 of earnings, \$2.20 of local tax revenue and \$3.78 of state tax revenue. National travel trends show travel spending by both

domestic and international visitors in the United States was \$658 billion in 2006, a 6.3 increase over 2005. The full report, California Travel Impacts by County 1992–2005, 2006 Preliminary State Estimates, is available online at the CTTC Web site, www.visitcalifornia.com, by clicking on the research button at the bottom of the page. Media contact: Jennifer Jasper, California Travel and Tourism Commission, (916) 319-5428, jjasper@visitcalifornia.com. Public contact: www.visitcalifornia.com.

CALIFORNIA TREASURE HUNT REWARDS VISITORS

Beginning May 1 and running through Labor Day, visitors traveling to and within California can enter the California Treasure Hunt Sweepstakes to win fantastic vacations, get savings at over 600 California hotels, and savings at over 100 attractions in California. Here's how it works: Participating retailers and restaurants will give California Treasure Keys to their customers. The Treasure Keys instruct customers to go to www.visitcalifornia.com/treasure where they will enter a unique code to enter sweepstakes and deposit California Rewards "dollars" (shown on Key) good for savings at hotels, and print out coupons to California's attractions. These customers also can book their hotel online by using their California Rewards Dollars any time in the next two years. It's simple, and rewarding. And, anyone booking their air travel to or within California online through Southwest Airlines during the promotion will get their California Treasure Key right on their e-tickets (www.Southwest.com). To find a list of participating retailers and restaurants, go to www.visitcalifornia.com/treasure. Media contact: Jennifer Jasper, California Travel and Tourism Commission, (916) 319-5428, jjasper@visitcalifornia.com. Public contact: www.visitcalifornia.com.

NEW CALIFORNIA HATS, BAGS AND EATS PACKAGES AVAILABLE

Available April 21 for travelers looking for unique cultural, heritage and shopping experiences are more than 30 HATS, BAGS and EATS packages. Shopping and Dining are the top tourism activities in North America, but did you also know that cultural and heritage tourism is the third most popular travel activity? In fact, visitors who engage in cultural and heritage tourism stay longer to enjoy the highest levels of

travel satisfaction. Now through an innovative partnership with California Tourism, leading cultural and heritage attractions and Shop California, the new HATS, BAGS and EATS collection offers a wide range of cultural, historic and shopping tours throughout the golden state. Travel planners have a choice of packages in California's 12 diverse tourism regions, priced from \$40 to \$400. Packages are sold at www.shopcalifornia.org, www.visitcalifornia.com, www.shopamericatours.com and through leading tour operators and travel agents worldwide. Developed and certified for Shop California by Shop America Tours, these dynamic packages will appeal to all types of travelers—couples, friends, families, international and domestic visitors. Media contact: Jennifer Jasper, California Travel and Tourism Commission, (916) 319-5428, jjasper@visitcalifornia.com. Public contact: www.shopcalifornia.org, www.visitcalifornia.com, www.shopamericatours.com.

EXPRESSJET OFFERING NON-STOP ROUTES FOR CALIFORNIA

ExpressJet Airlines has announced flight service to 24 cities across the U.S. West Coast, Southwest and Midwest regions beginning April 2007. ExpressJet is a new branded service allowing customers convenience with more non-stop flights, valet carry-on bag service, and more than 100 channels of free XM Satellite Radio. ExpressJet schedules and fares are available for sale through most distribution channels, including travel agencies, online and online distribution channels, for service originating from Los Angeles/Ontario, Sacramento, Austin, San Antonio and New Orleans to destinations in Albuquerque, Spokane, Boise, Tucson, Omaha, Kansas City, MO, Colorado Springs, Oklahoma City, Tulsa, Birmingham, Raleigh/Durham, Louisville, Monterey, CA, Fresno, Bakersfield, Jacksonville, FL, El Paso and Corpus Christi. Media contact: ExpressJet, Corporate Communications, (832) 353-3333, press@expressjet.com. Public contact: www.expressjet.com or www.xjet.com.

SOUTHWEST AIRLINES LAUNCHES RENO/SAN DIEGO SERVICE

Southwest Airlines in March launched two daily, non-stop flights between San Diego and the Reno-Tahoe International Airport. One of the new flights leaves San Diego at 9:30 a.m. and arrives in Reno at 11:10 a.m. The second flight leaves San Diego at 6:55 p.m. and arrives at the Reno-Tahoe International Airport at 8:30 p.m. From transportation to Tahoe from Reno, travelers can book reservations on the 21-passenger North Lake Tahoe Express shuttle, which include stops at major lodging properties in the North Lake Tahoe and Truckee areas. The North Lake Tahoe Express runs daily from 3:30 a.m. to 12 midnight. Fares are \$35 per person, one-way, \$60 round trip. Discounts are available for groups of two or more, and frequent-user passes are available for \$100 for five trips when purchased at one time. Group rates are also available. Reservations are required for the shuttle and should be made at least four hours in advance. Media contact: Pettit Gilwee, Pettit Gilwee PR, (530) 583-2138, pettit@gilweepr.com. Public contact: North Lake Tahoe Visitors Bureaus, (877) 949-3296 or (775) 832-1606, www.GoTahoeNorth.com.



MEUX HOME MUSEUM EXHIBIT RECREATES 1907 WEDDING

During the month of October 2007, the Meux Home Museum in Fresno will commemorate the historic wedding

of the eldest Meux daughter who married in the front parlor of the home in October 1907. The Museum will showcase the wedding as an exhibit by decorating the house as it was 100 years ago in celebration of the wedding. The wedding exhibit will allow visitors to browse historic artifacts and learn about Victorian life in California's verdant Central Valley. The wedding was the social event of the season, and was extensively covered and described by the press. The bride's carefully restored wedding dress will be proudly displayed in the bedroom she resided in. The Meux home was built in 1888 and was continuously occupied by the Meux family until 1970. The Meux Home Museum was established in 1978.

The Museum is open Friday—Sunday, from noon to 3:30 p.m. Media and public contact: Meux Home Museum, (559) 233-8007, meuxhome@comcast.net, www.meux.mus.ca.us.

NEW MARRIOTT RESIDENCE INN COMING TO OCEANSIDE

A Marriott Residence Inn hotel has broke ground in Oceanside and is scheduled to open in September 2007. The 125-suite property is located near the city's new corporate center, Ocean Ranch Plaza. Guests at the new Residence Inn Oceanside will find all of the top rated services and amenities that travelers expect from a Marriott property, including complimentary hot breakfast buffet and afternoon social hour, free wireless Internet access, swimming pool and exercise room, and complimentary grocery shopping service. Residence Inn Oceanside will also feature 1,000 square feet of meeting space. Media contact: Leslee Gaul, Oceanside Chamber of Commerce, (760) 721-1101, leslee@oceansidechamber.com. Public contact: Oceanside Chamber of Commerce, (760) 722- 1534, info@oceansidechamber.com, www.oceansidechamber.com.

VILLAGIO INN & SPA IN YOUNTVILLE TO UNVEIL NEW SPA IN 2008

The Villagio Inn & Spa in Yountville is scheduled to open a new multi-million dollar, 13,000 square foot spa in spring 2008. The new destination spa will be one of the largest in Napa Valley and will offer a complete range of menu items from individual, half and full-day treatments. Spa goers will be greeted by a peaceful interior fashioned with rich earth tone furnishings and a distressed wood beam ceiling, creating a warm and inviting feeling. Wellness treatments will be performed in 17 new rooms, located on two floors. The spa will also include separate men's and women's relaxation areas, seven private "spa suite" luxury treatment rooms, sunken whirlpool bathtubs, a heated hydrotherapy pool, flat screen televisions, private terraces, cozy fireplaces and poolside spa cuisine service. The haven for rest and relaxation will feature Napa Valley's leading spa therapists and estheticians who will perform a host of soothing customized beauty treatments, including body polishes, scrubs, wraps and specialty

massages and facials. The new spa will be open daily from 7:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. Media contact: Susan Bejeckian, Susan Bejeckian Public Relations, (625) 570-1051, sbpr@charter.net. Public contact: Steve Andrews, Villagio Inn & Spa, (707) 948-5084, www.villagio.com.

WESTIN MONACHE RESORT OPENS AT MAMMOTH LAKES THIS FALL

Nearly two years after Westin Hotels and Intrawest announced plans for a luxury resort in Mammoth, the 230-condominium-hotel is scheduled to open its doors in September 2007. The Westin Monache Resort will be the first full-service, luxury property in the region and the flagship property of The Village at Mammoth. The Westin Monache Resort will be located in The Village at Mammoth and adjacent to Mammoth Mountain's 15-passenger express gondola. Among its many amenities, the hotel will include panoramic views of the mountains, a full service restaurant, 24-hour room service, ski valet, a pool and hot tubs,

fitness facilities, underground parking and over 2,000 square feet of meeting space. Media contact: Rebecca Broz, Westin Monache, Mammoth, (760) 934-7306, rbroz@westinmammoth.com, www.westin.com/mammoth. Public contact: Westin Monache, Mammoth, (760) 934-2526, www.westinmammoth.com.

L.A. LIVE TO BRING MORE SPORTS, ENTERTAINMENT TO DOWNTOWN

L.A. Live, a 4 million square-foot, \$2.5 billion downtown Los Angeles sports, residential and entertainment district is currently being created by Los Angeles-based AEG. L.A. Live, located across six city blocks, adjacent to STAPLES Center and the Los Angeles Convention Center, features NOKIA Theatre at L.A. Live, a 7,100-seat live theatre, a 54-story, 1000-room convention "headquarters" hotel (combining JW Marriott and Ritz Carlton brands with 224 luxury condominiums—The Ritz Carlton Residences at L.A. Live), Club NOKIA at L.A. Live, a 2,200 capacity

live music venue, a 14-screen Regal Cineplex, "broadcast" facilities for ESPN, The Grammy Museum, Conga Room and Lucky Strike bowling center room along with entertainment, restaurant, residential and office space. The Nokia Theatre at L.A. Live is slated to open in fall 2007 with additional phases of L.A. Live opening every quarter leading up to the debut of the hotel in early 2010. Media contact: Michael Roth, AEG, (213) 742-7155, mroth@staplescenter.com. Public contact: AEG, www.aegworldwide.com.



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